

Governor Carney, Lt. Governor Hall-Long Announce \$50M American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Investment in Jobs Training

Investments will expand Forward Delaware, and fund Pathways 2.0, which will expand the Pathways program to reach more than 6,000 Delaware middle school students and 80 percent of Delaware high school students

WILMINGTON, Del. – Governor John Carney and Lt. Governor Hall-Long joined private sector leaders at Delaware Technical Community College (DTCC) on Tuesday to announce a \$50 million investment in workforce development, including an expansion of the [Forward Delaware jobs-training program](#) for industries most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and additional work experience services for Delaware students.

The investments are funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), which was championed by Delaware's Congressional Delegation – U.S. Senators Tom Carper and Chris Coons, along with Congresswoman Lisa Blunt Rochester. ARPA was passed by Congress and then signed into law by President Joe Biden on March 11.

“We’re focused on investments that will build on the strengths of Delaware’s world-class workforce and support Delaware families and businesses who were most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic,” said **Governor Carney**. “These workforce development

programs will help Delawareans develop the skills they need to succeed in a 21st century economy. And the expansion of our Pathways program will connect even more students with real-world work experience while they're still in school. I want to thank President Biden and members of Delaware's federal delegation for making these important resources available."

Tuesday's announcement includes a **\$15.8 million public-private expansion of [Delaware's Pathways program](#)**, which links education and workforce development programs and allows students to gain real-world work experience while in school.

"This investment in Delaware's workforce will meet the challenges of tomorrow by working together, to strengthen Delaware's economy, while providing our families the tools and skills they need to succeed," said **Lt. Governor Bethany Hall-Long**. "This public-private partnership makes strategic investments in our workforce that were not only hit the hardest during the pandemic as well as those that will lead us into the future with a focus on careers in STEM, healthcare, increasing women and minorities in construction, and our restaurant and hotel industry."

Pathways 2.0 will expand the Pathways program into Delaware middle schools, reaching more than 6,000 students. The investment will also grow the Pathways program in Delaware high schools to reach 32,000 students, about 80 percent of all students attending Delaware public high schools. Formed in 2015, the Pathways program currently serves about 20,000 high school students.

"The pandemic has made significant changes to our economy and workforce needs, and Delaware must adapt in order to be a competitive state with a first-class workforce now and in the future," said **Sens. Carper, Coons and Rep. Blunt Rochester**. "We commend Governor Carney for his focus on workforce development throughout this difficult period, and Delaware Technical Community College for always adapting their programs

to provide practical workforce needs.”

The State of Delaware will invest \$8.3 million in the Pathways 2.0 expansion – targeting support for workforce development in health care, IT, finance, and engineering. The investments will also expand employer-driven apprenticeship programs that allow Delawareans to “earn and learn” in high-growth, high-wage industries.

Private and public entities contributed major funding toward the next phase of work through 2024, including Bloomberg Philanthropies, Walton Family Foundation, ASA (American Student Assistance), JPMorgan Chase, the Delaware Business Roundtable Education Committee (DBREC), and the Delaware Department of Education (DOE).

“Delaware is an important proof point for the nation on how states can rethink their schools as economic engines for the 21st century,” said **Jenny Sharfstein Kane of Bloomberg Philanthropies**. “Bloomberg Philanthropies was proud to help catalyze Delaware’s pathways system in 2018, and we’re excited to partner to accelerate this work even further. This is also a significant example of how private and public funding can come together to mobilize maximum support and impact of the work.

“Young adults want meaningful, applicable learning experiences as they craft their unique path to a successful life,” said **Romy Drucker, K-12 education program director for the Walton Family Foundation**. “Only with deeper connections and collaboration between K-12 schools, colleges and employers can this be the reality for all students.”

“Delaware’s collaborative efforts will further ‘blur the lines’ between school and work—and make the world after graduation much more tangible and attainable for thousands of young people,” said **Rodman Ward III, president and CEO of Corporation Service Company (CSC) and board chair of Rodel, a**

nonprofit that supports the public-private partnership in career pathways.

“We know that middle school is a crucial point in the education continuum when there is an enormous opportunity to help students better know themselves and understand their long-term education and career goals,” said **ASA President and CEO Jean Eddy**. “However, middle schoolers often experience stress when thinking about the future because there are so few resources available to help them plan. We are excited to partner with the state and other dedicated funders to significantly increase access to highly effective and engaging career exploration experiences that will empower thousands of young people to discover their interests, explore their options, and get hands-on experience that can help build students’ confidence in the future, as well as the skills necessary for their long-term success.”

“The negative, financial effects of the pandemic have disproportionately affected restaurants more than any other business sector, and with 5,000 open positions statewide, Delaware’s restaurant industry will only recover with a skilled workforce,” said **Carrie Leishman, President and CEO of the Delaware Restaurant Association**. “With 98% of Delaware restaurants reporting open positions, these funds will be used to rapidly advance training into all corners of our state, by supporting opportunity and upward mobility for those seeking to enter and re-enter the hospitality industry. We thank the Governor for continuing to support restaurants and the 46,000 Delawareans that make up its workforce.”

“This funding will accelerate our pathways models—bringing more students face-to-face with employers, while providing opportunities to earn college credit and industry credentials sooner,” said **Joseph Jones, superintendent of the New Castle County Vocational Technical School District**.

Additionally, the investments announced on Tuesday will

support:

- **\$1.5 million** – Delaware Department of Labor (DOL) Workforce Programs. Training programs will be offered statewide and designed to assist Delaware workers and their families who have been impacted most by the COVID-19 crisis. The initiative will focus on health care, logistics, and transportation.
- **\$1.2 million** – Expansion of Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) Workforce Development Academy. Funding seeks to increase the participation of women, minorities, and disadvantaged Delawareans seeking employment in the highway construction industry.
- **\$1 million** – Restaurant and Hotel Industry Support. Funding will focus on training and pathways to employment for Delawareans seeking employment in Delaware's hospitality industry.

"DelDOT is making significant infrastructure investments across our state and it is important we are doing all we can to build the workforce of today and tomorrow and establishing a workforce that looks like the communities we represent," said **Nicole Majeski, Secretary of the Delaware Department of Transportation**.

"We are pleased that the Governor has continued investment in Forward Delaware. The program has become a recognized hub for employers and employees seeking information, data and resources to help Delawareans impacted by the COVID Pandemic," said **Karryl Hubbard, Secretary of the Delaware Department of Labor**. "These critical federal funds will enhance an already successful model for developing and upskilling workers and will positively impact employment prospects for many underserved groups across the state. We look forward to working with our partners and providing training for critical industry needs."

Click [here](#) to view video from today's announcement.

Click [here](#) to view photos from today's announcement.

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